

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114(c)
USSN 09/865,666
Attorney Docket Q64700
March 22, 2004

REMARKS

Claims 30-32 are all the claims pending in the application.

In maintaining the rejection of Claims 27-29 in the Advisory Action the Examiner took the position that Kessler teaches a low cost way of reinforcing a panel with foamed ribs and that one seeking to minimize cost in Marchisio would choose such ribs and substitute a thin impermeable layer for the complex structural layer taught in the preferred embodiment of Marchisio for layer three (column 2, lines 45-55 of Marchisio). The Examiner further took the position that Marchisio teaches an outer skin on layer five (column 2, lines 24-25) which can be considered a type of cladding.

The foregoing arguments presented by the Examiner are believed to be moot in view of the newly submitted claims. New Claim 30 specifically calls for a plurality of spaced apart reinforcing ribs disposed in different planes and protruding from an outer face of the wheel arch panel remote from a wheel of a motor vehicle. These features are not disclosed in Marchisio or Kessler. The wheel arch panel of Marchisio is provided with completely smooth inner and outer surfaces without any reinforcing ribs whatsoever. The Patent to Kessler is directed to plastic siding for the exterior surfaces of buildings. Accordingly, Kessler only teaches the use of ribs on an inner surface of the flat plastic panel. There is nothing in the teachings of Marchisio or Kessler which would lead one skilled in the art to even consider applying the rib construction of Kessler to a wheel arch panel. Furthermore, even if such a remote idea occurred to one skilled in the art there is absolutely no teaching which would suggest placing the ribs on the outer surface

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of the wheel arch panel. Such an idea could only come from the disclosure of the present application.

In addition to specifying that the reinforcing ribs are on an outer face of the panel remote from a wheel of a motor vehicle new Claim 30 also specifically calls for the plurality of reinforcing ribs being spaced apart and disposed in different planes. The Examiner's attention is directed to Figure 3 which shows the reinforcing ribs as being separate from each other with the ribs 12 located on an inwardly directed surface of the wheel arch panel are in a different plane than the ribs 13 extending about the periphery of the wheel arch panel. Such a feature is not disclosed or even remotely suggested by Kessler. As a result of the foregoing construction as specifically defined in new Claim 30 the inner face of the wheel arch panel which in use is intended to face toward a wheel of a motor vehicle is free from concavities in the regions of the reinforcing ribs. This is important in a wheel arch panel since any concavities on the inner face of the wheel arch panel which would tend to collect mud or slush which would then lead to a build up of mud or slush on the inner face of the panel.

In summary it is submitted that it would not be the least bit obvious to one skilled in the art to consider combining the teachings of Kessler with the teachings of Marchisio and even if such a combination was made the resultant combination would still lack specific features called or in Claims 30-32. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that Claims 30-32 inclusive be allowed and the application passed to issue forthwith.

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If for any reason the Examiner is unable to allow the application on the next Office Action and feels that an interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issue, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney for the purpose of arranging such an interview.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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